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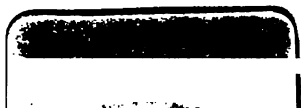
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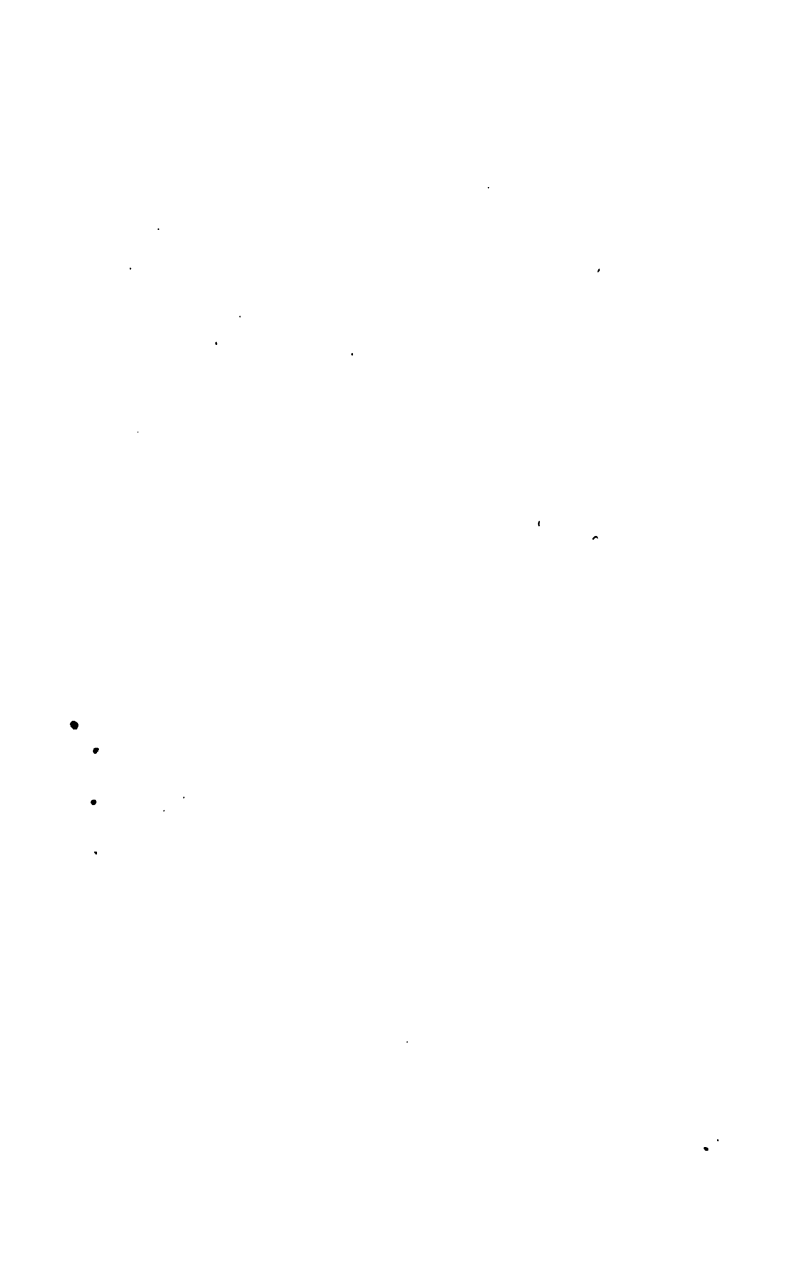
SIMPLE LESSONS.

PART II.

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SIMPLE LESSONS;

OR,

WORDS EASY TO BE UNDERSTOOD.

SIMPLE LESSONS;

OR,

Words Easy to be Understood.

PART II.

EXPLANATION OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

“Except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken?”—1 *Cor.* xiv. 9.

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J. AND C. MOZLEY, 6, PATERNOSTER ROW;
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PREFACE.

THE following pages contain the second part of a course of instruction, the first portion of which was confined to the Apostles' Creed. This part embraces the Ten Commandments, and thus supplies the more practical portion of the series.

It is composed in the same simple and familiar style as the earlier portion, and will be found, it is hoped, as well suited to its purpose. Those only who have had actual experience in teaching, can tell both the need and the importance of such clear elementary instruction, in order to secure an accurate and detailed knowledge of the foundations of Christian doctrine and practice, so necessary for its own sake, as well as to form the basis of advanced teaching in the deeper mysteries of the Mind of God.

It is hoped that a third part will be added at some future time, which will embrace the Sacraments, the Ordinances of divine worship, and the simpler elements of the Church's Ritual.

This unpretending work is humbly offered in furtherance of the work of the Church, in dependence on the grace of God, and with the request that those who find it useful to themselves or others, may ask His blessing for her to whose labour and experience we are indebted for it.

T. T. C.

Clewer Rectory, August, 1866.

Explanation of the Ten Commandments.

CHAPTER I.

**"IF THOU WILT ENTER INTO LIFE, KEEP THE
COMMANDMENTS."**—*St. Matthew, xix. 17.*

MOST people who have been to Church, know that there are ten Commandments.

It is very likely that those who do know this, and who have heard them read in Church every Sunday, have never seriously thought whose Commandments they are, and how very often they themselves break the whole of them. By breaking them, I mean that they do things that are forbidden by God's Commandments.

First, let us consider what is a commandment? It is something that tells us what must be done, or must not be done, ordered

by someone who has a right to order, and who has a right to punish those who do not obey.

Commandments are laws. Kings and their ministers have a right to make laws for the country; a father has a right to make laws and give rules for his family; and both king and parent have a right to punish if the laws are broken.

But one far greater than any earthly king or father, **ALMIGHTY GOD** our Heavenly King and Father, has given us His Commandments and laws; He has told us we must obey them, and we must do this as dutiful children of a most loving Father, even if there were no fear of everlasting fire as the punishment of the disobedient.

The Ten Commandments were given by **ALMIGHTY GOD** Himself to Moses, who was the Chief of God's chosen people, the Jews. **GOD** gave them long before the coming of our **LORD JESUS CHRIST**, and the people were commanded to keep them. But we are told in the Bible that we ought to keep them even more strictly than the Jews did. Our Blessed **LORD** Himself has taught us how we are to do this. He said He did not come to destroy or do away with the Law, but to fulfil it; to

teach us how to keep it more fully and perfectly than it had ever been kept before.

In the Church Catechism we are taught that the Ten Commandments are "The same which GOD spake in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, saying, I am the LORD thy GOD, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the House of Bondage."

Exodus is one of the Books or parts of the Old Testament, which tells us about GOD's chosen people the Jews, who were once in slavery or bondage in a country called Egypt, and how ALMIGHTY GOD sent Moses to take them away from their cruel masters, and lead them into another country which GOD gave them to live in, and where they were to worship and serve Him.

The name Exodus is given to this part of the Bible because the word Exodus means "going out," and it tells us about the Children of Israel going out of Egypt.

Israel was the name GOD gave to Jacob instead of his own name; and when we speak of the Children of Israel, we do not mean to say they were really children in age, but that Israel was the head or first of the family, and all his descendants, all who came after him,

are called his children, though they were grown up people. The House of Bondage means the place where they were slaves. Bondage means slavery, it is a type of sin; and GOD saving His people the Jews from slavery is a type of His saving us from our sins, which make us the slaves of Satan.

Now if the Jews were bound to keep GOD's Commandments because He saved them from slavery, how much more are we bound to keep them in gratitude for our Redemption through the Incarnation of our LORD JESUS CHRIST? His being made man for us. For we were through Him delivered from the slavery of Satan, made GOD's children in Holy Baptism, and sanctified by His HOLY SPIRIT, who gives us the power to keep His Commandments in the right way.

When ALMIGHTY GOD gave the Ten Commandments to Moses, He made him go up to the top of a high mountain called Mount Sinai. There was thunder and lightning, and Moses heard the Voice of GOD speaking to him. Moses did not see GOD; the Bible tells us no one has seen GOD at any time, but he heard His Voice.

Then GOD gave Moses two tables of stone.

A table of stone does not here mean what we call a table, but a tablet; like those flat pieces of stone we see on the walls of churches in memory of people who have been buried near.

You will notice that the Ten Commandments are written up in churches, generally on two separate boards, to remind us of the two tables of stone that God gave to Moses after He had Himself written the Ten Commandments on them.

There were two tables; because on one was written our duty to God, and on the other our duty to our neighbour.

You know, I told you before, that our neighbours are not only the people who live next door to us; but everybody, all our fellow creatures; because we ought to behave in a kind and neighbourly way to all, whoever they may be.

In the Catechism you are asked, "What dost thou chiefly learn by these Commandments?" And the answer is: "I learn two things: my duty towards God, and my duty towards my neighbour." Your duty towards people means how you are bound to behave to them.

On the first table are the four Commandments which teach us our duty to GOD. Our duty to Him is our first and greatest duty; and so it ought to come first.

There are six Commandments on the other table, and they all teach us our duty to our neighbour.

It is very likely, at first sight, persons may think it very easy to keep God's Commandments. They may say, "I am sure I never do all those wicked things that ALMIGHTY GOD says are not to be done. I never worship idols; I don't swear, or work on Sundays; I always behaved well to my father and mother as long as they lived; I am sure I never murdered anyone; I never got into trouble for taking what was not my own; nobody can say a word against my character for steadiness; and as to being covetous, I may have wanted things belonging to others, but I never wished harm to them for the sake of getting anything that was theirs."

Now this is, I am afraid, what a great many people say, and if they do not say it openly they think it, and so deceive themselves.

The reason why I wish to teach you so *particularly* about the Commandments is, that

I want you to learn to keep them as our Blessed LORD tells us they must be kept; and if you look into your hearts and try to see if you keep them as He says, you will soon find, that instead of never breaking them, hardly a day ever passes without many of them being broken in one way or another.

Teach me, O LORD, the WAY of Thy Commandments; and I shall keep them unto the end. Give me understanding, that I may keep Thy Law, and walk in the paths of Thy Commandments.

CHAPTER II.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.

“THOU SHALT HAVE NONE OTHER GODS BUT ME.”

REMEMBER it was Almighty GOD who said these words. He said, “I am the LORD thy God; thou shalt not have nor worship any gods besides Me.”

Now it may seem very easy to keep this Commandment; you may say, “I know quite well that there is no GOD but one, the ever

Blessed Trinity—FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. I know in some countries people worship idols, but in England we know better.”

This is what I dare say you thought to yourself when you first heard this Commandment; and it would be all true enough if people never did worship anybody or anything but idols; but we must look a little closer into the matter.

In the first place, this Commandment teaches us to love, serve, and worship, the only True God; and not only this, but to love Him better than any body or any thing in the world; to serve Him better than the best servant serves the best of masters, and not to worship any one or any thing but GOD alone.

Now ask yourself, Do you love GOD better than any one or any thing in the world? Is there not something you put in the place of GOD, and make, as we say, a god of it? To love any thing better than Him is breaking this Commandment. To love any person or thing so much that it makes us forget GOD, and even disobey Him for them, is a sin against it. It may be a parent, a child, a husband or wife, a brother or sister; all these

we ought to love as *ourselves*, but not as God.

If we love ourselves, our own comfort, our dress, our houses, so much as to make us forget God, or think but seldom of Him, we are serving ourselves instead of Him who gave us all good things to be used to His glory, and not only for our own comfort.

There are many people who make an idol of money; they love it for itself, not for the good they may do with it. Others love to be thought much of; they are always wanting to be thought greater than their neighbours—the love of worldly honour is their idol. Others think themselves so clever that they are ready to worship themselves for it; they forget what they would be if Almighty God had not given them the cleverness they are so proud of, and they never think how very little they really do with all the abilities He has given them.

Anything that is slighting to the honour of God is a sin against this Commandment; such as trying charms, and going to fortune-tellers. To try to find out what is going to happen to us when God has kept it from us, and what no one but Himself can know, is really putting these artful people in the place of

God by fancying they can tell what only He knows.

There is one thing you must remember, that, as all sin makes us the slaves of Satan, so it makes him our master; and dreadful as it may sound, those who sin wilfully, put the devil in the place of God, and worship him and serve him instead of God. They would be no doubt very angry to be told they loved Satan instead of God; but if they do not actually love him, they love his works and his ways; he is their idol, and they are his slaves.

O let us try and serve God and Him alone, and pray to Him to fill our hearts with such love to Him, that we may love everything else through Him and for Him. His service is perfect freedom, so we shall be delivered from the bondage of Satan even as Almighty God delivered His chosen people out of the House of Bondage in Egypt.

CHAPTER III.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.

“THOU SHALT NOT MAKE TO THYSELF ANY GRAVEN IMAGE, NOR THE LIKENESS OF ANYTHING THAT IS IN HEAVEN ABOVE, OR IN THE EARTH BENEATH, OR IN THE WATER UNDER THE EARTH. THOU SHALT NOT BOW DOWN TO THEM, NOR WORSHIP THEM: FOR I THE LORD THY GOD AM A JEALOUS GOD, AND VISIT THE SINS OF THE FATHERS UPON THE CHILDREN, UNTO THE THIRD AND FOURTH GENERATION OF THEM THAT HATE ME, AND SHEW MERCY UNTO THOUSANDS IN THEM THAT LOVE ME, AND KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS.”

THE Second Commandment is very much like the First. The First Commandment tells us not to worship any but the one true God, and the Second tells us some of the things we are most particularly not to worship. We are told not to make graven images for the purpose of worshipping them, or saying our prayers to them.

You know what an image is. It is a figure like some living thing, such as men and animals. A statue is an image. The word

image means a likeness; we say such a one is the very image of another. The Bible says God made man in His own image—that means like Him. A graven image means a figure carved out of wood, or stone, or something of the kind.

Now when we are told we are not to make images, it means, as I said before, that we are not to make them for the purpose of saying our prayers to them. This would be making them Idols, as poor ignorant people in Heathen countries do, and call them gods. All people who do not worship the true God are called Heathens.

We may make images and statues of men, women, and children, and figures of animals. We may make statues and likenesses of our relations and friends, and of kings and great people. We may make statues and pictures of good and holy men and women, and of our Blessed LORD Himself; but we must not worship the images and pictures that we make of them.

The Commandment goes on to say we must not worship the likeness of anything that is in heaven above;—this means the sun, *the moon*, the stars, or birds that fly in the

air. Nor in the earth beneath;—this means any living creatures, or the likeness of them. Nor in the waters under the earth;—this means fishes, and all animals that live in the water. All these the Heathen people worshipped.

This is the reason why GOD gave this Commandment. When the people became wicked again after the Flood, they began to make idols, or images, and said their prayers to them, instead of saying them to Almighty GOD. They had no faith, and because they could not see GOD they forgot Him; and so these foolish people put their trust in bits of wood and stone, that they had themselves cut out into the shape of some creature; just because they could see these images, they said their prayers to them, and fancied they could help them.

In many countries abroad, the people even now make idols and worship them; some of these idols are frightful creatures, not like anything that ever lived. You may have seen some of them in the shops where they sell curiosities from abroad; and I dare say, if you ever thought about it, you would laugh at them, and call the people who made them

poor ignorant creatures, and think how much wiser you and all the people in England are than they. But as I said before, if you make too much of anything you love, you make an idol of it; you put it in the place of God; you trust in it, that it will make you happier than serving Him; and if you do this, are you much better than the poor Heathen people you despise?

Now, having seen how many ways there are of breaking these two Commandments, let us try and learn the way to keep them.

First, we must believe in the one true God, and no other; we must love Him with all our hearts, better than anything else in the world. We must put our trust in Him, and believe that all He orders is for our good. Then instead of looking down on the poor Heathen, and laughing at their idols, we must pray to God to convert them. I mean by convert to turn their hearts, that they may believe in the one true God. We must remember, as well, to pray for those in our own country, who live without God in their hearts, those who never heard of our Blessed *REDEEMER'S* name, and are living lives worse

than the Heathen who have never heard of God.

In the Second Commandment, speaking of idols, God said, "Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them, for I, the LORD thy God, am a jealous God." Now you may perhaps think it a strange thing to say the LORD GOD is jealous, because we so often use this word when we mean to blame people; but you must remember there are many words in the Bible which seem strange till they come to be explained. We say Almighty God is jealous, and we say He is angry, but we do not mean He is angry or jealous in the same way as men and women are; we have no better words to use, and so we speak of His justice and wrath in the same way as we do when we are talking of what we should feel ourselves if we thought those who ought to love us most, loved others more than they loved us.

Almighty God tells us we must not bow down or kneel to worship an image, because He will have our whole worship paid to Himself alone; not only the worship of our hearts, but of our bodies. For this cause we kneel when we pray to Him. "O come, let

us worship and fall down and kneel before the LORD our MAKER."

Almighty GOD will not allow worship to be paid to any but Himself. He will "visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Him." This means that GOD will cause the children of those who sin against Him to suffer for the wickedness of their parents. We often see this now; if a father or mother is drunken, or idle, or wicked in any way, their children will suffer for it. But then our Heavenly Father says also, He will "show mercy unto thousands in them that love Him and keep His Commandments." May He give us His grace so to keep them that we may obtain His mercy both now and at the last great day.

CHAPTER IV.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT.

“THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAIN, FOR THE LORD WILL NOT HOLD HIM GUILTLESS THAT TAKETH HIS NAME IN VAIN.”

THE Third Commandment is also one which teaches us part of our duty to God. The great duty of reverence, I mean paying the greatest respect to His Holy Name and all that is sacred; and it shows us the great sin of using it lightly, or in vain.

Now, what does in vain mean? You know, if you speak of people being vain, you generally mean that they are proud of their looks, or their fine clothes; but this is not what the words “in vain” mean here. They mean vain words, idle words, thoughtless talk; talk without meaning or caring what is said. To take God’s Name in vain, means to say it carelessly, lightly, irreverently, or wickedly.

Now, if anyone said to me, “I never break this Commandment, for I never swear, or use

bad language;" I should say, "Very likely you never do; but for all that, you may not keep it as you ought." Of course, the most dreadful and wicked way of breaking it, is false swearing, taking a false oath in a court of justice, calling GOD to witness to a lie, as if He did not know it was a lie, though men might be deceived by it.

But though false swearing is so horribly wicked, yet a true oath, taken when rightly called to do so, in the cause of truth and justice, is lawful, and really, when we come to think of it, is a very solemn thing. It is calling Almighty GOD to witness to the truth of the evidence we are giving; and surely this, if done reverently, is a religious act. In the Bible, we read of Almighty GOD saying, "I have sworn by Myself." When our Blessed LORD said to the Jews, "Swear not at all," He meant in common conversation; for it would seem that if they disputed about anything, they used to swear by the Throne of GOD, or the earth, or even their own heads; for our LORD says, "Ye cannot make one hair black or white." This was very different from a solemn oath in a court of justice, and is very like the habit some

people have now-a-days, of using God's Holy Name on every occasion with oaths, and often even about things which have neither truth nor sense in them—just a bad habit, as people call it—many times calling upon Almighty God to destroy their souls! What if He took them at their word? Truly swearing is a vice which has even no fancied pleasure in it, no profit, as we say; people may fancy they get pleasure and profit too by other sins, but by swearing they can get neither one nor the other. This sin is going out of one's way to insult the Most High God, and He says it is a sin that shall not go unpunished.

There are many other sins of the tongue, not so bad as what I have just been speaking of, but still they offend Almighty God very much; and these are the sins so many fall into who say they never swear. I mean carelessly using God's Name in common talk, saying, "God bless me!" when they are not even thinking of God, much less wishing for His blessing—saying it often even in anger. Then, not quite so bad, but really a very wrong thing, is to have a habit of saying, "Good gracious!" because it really means "God be gracious;" surely this is a way

of taking God's Name in vain, and many people do this who would be ashamed to swear or use bad language.

Now there is a much more common way of breaking the Third Commandment, and I am afraid few people are really quite innocent of it. I mean, using God's Holy Name in their prayers either in church or at home without thinking of what they are about; often lolling or sitting instead of kneeling or standing when they ought, and thinking of something quite different from what they are saying; something they have been doing or are going to do, or about the other people in the church, how they are dressed and how they look—all the time saying over and over again the Holy Names of GOD and JESUS. Very likely, after the very Commandment we have been talking of has been said, they may answer, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this Law," and never think what a mockery it is to do the very thing they are pretending to ask God to keep them from. Is not this an insult to God? Is not this taking His Name in vain?

Now suppose you wanted to ask a favour *of some very great person*, and you were

allowed to go to his house to speak to him; and suppose instead of thinking of what you came for, and asking in a proper respectful manner, you were to sit down and stare about you, at the people in the room, or at the pictures, and in a rude careless way say what you wanted. Do you think you would get what you asked for? Surely not; you would not be listened to, and perhaps would be turned out of the room.

Well, is it not far worse to behave like this in God's House? And do you think He will listen to you? He has said, "Ask, and ye shall have;" but you must ask properly, and with that respect which, when we are speaking of God and holy things, we call reverence.

And now let us consider how we may do our best to keep this Commandment. First, we must keep a strict watch over our words, for fear we may say anything to offend Almighty God.

When we think what a wonderful thing it is to be able to speak at all, and that God gave us our tongues that we might praise Him, and help our fellow-creatures, is it not dreadful to think that our voices can ever be

used to curse Him and our neighbour, and to take His Name in vain? You must be very careful, for an ill word soon slips out, and you can never get it back again. The Bible says we shall have to give account of every idle word. Every idle word! and what of the wicked words? Think what a fearful reckoning there will be for swearers at the Day of Judgment! You ought to be very careful not to keep company with those who have the habit of taking GOD's Name in vain. What should we think of anyone who sat by and said nothing when he heard his father or mother made game of? And shall we hear our Heavenly Father's Name taken in vain and say nothing? Surely this would be joining in the sin. We must remember the last part of the Commandment; "GOD will not hold him guiltless that taketh His Name in vain." This means that GOD will find them guilty, and punish them, who treat His Holy Name with this dreadful disrespect.

Before you go to Church, and as you walk along, you should try and not think of anything but GOD and holy things; and when you get into the church, you should kneel down and say a prayer like this: "O LORD,

I am now in Thine House. Have mercy on me, and keep me from seeing or hearing anything that may take off my thoughts from Thee. Give me Thy HOLY SPIRIT, that I may pray to Thee and praise Thee with attention and reverence; and be pleased, O Good LORD, to hear my prayers, for JESUS CHRIST's sake. Amen.

Remember you must not make fun of anything that happens in Church, nor make rude remarks about the Clergyman. Do not listen to stories that people often tell, of mistakes, and droll things which have happened in Church, and which they often pretend to have seen or heard. These then will come into your head at times when you would wish to think only of God, and then you would give anything not to have heard them.

Never be ready to find fault if you go to a different church from the one you have been used to, and find the service is not quite the same. The Prayers, Psalms, and Lessons must be the same, but there are different ways of singing or reading. It is a bad habit to be looking out for faults; it will make you not attend to your prayers if you are thinking

how they are said; and so you will run the risk of taking GOD'S Name in vain by your inattention. It is best to keep to our own church, and not to be running about from one to another.

Now let us think what a wonderful NAME the NAME OF GOD is; think of the wonderful works and miracles done by HIS NAME only—devils were cast out in His Name; the sick were healed in His Name; sins are forgiven in His Name. The Bible tells us in almost every page, how great is this NAME, what power it has over all; so that at the mention of it only, all these wonders were done. When we think of this we shall not be surprised at the command—"At the Name of JESUS every knee shall bow." We bow ourselves when we give glory to the ever blessed Trinity. "The glory equal," as we say in the Creed; so when we say or sing, "GLORY BE TO THE FATHER, AND TO THE SON, AND TO THE HOLY GHOST," we make our reverence at the word GLORY, to show that we do give equal glory alike to all the Three Persons of the ETERNAL GODHEAD. We bow our heads or bend our knees at these Holy Names when we are sitting or standing, because we cannot then kneel to

praise God. We bow or bend our knees to show all the reverence we can at the time. We need not bow our heads at the Holy Names when we are on our knees, because kneeling is more humble and reverent than bowing. Besides reverence to the Holy Name itself, everything belonging to God's service must be treated with the deepest respect. I have heard that the Jews in old time had so much reverence for the Name of God, that they always took a new pen when they were going to write it. You will notice that whenever we write God's Holy Name and every word that has anything about Him, we always put a large letter at the beginning; and often the Holy Names are all in these large capital letters. The Jews were always very careful of their religious books, for fear they should tear or hurt any part that had God's Name on it. They never burnt or destroyed a piece of paper, till they had looked to make sure His Holy Name was not there. How different from some persons calling themselves Christians, who never care how they use Bibles, Prayer Books, and Hymn Books; tearing out the leaves and scribbling on them. I dare say if you have ever done this, you never

thought it had anything to do with the Third Commandment; but now you do know it, be very careful to treat everything belonging to Almighty God and His Worship with the greatest reverence, that you may not be found guilty in His sight.

CHAPTER V.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

“REMEMBER THAT THOU KEEP HOLY THE SABBATH DAY. SIX DAYS SHALT THOU LABOUR, AND DO ALL THAT THOU HAST TO DO; BUT THE SEVENTH DAY IS THE SABBATH OF THE LORD THY GOD. IN IT THOU SHALT DO NO MANNER OF WORK, THOU, AND THY SON, AND THY DAUGHTER, THY MANSERVANT, AND THY MAIDSERVANT, THY CATTLE, AND THE STRANGER THAT IS WITHIN THY GATES. FOR IN SIX DAYS THE LORD MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH, THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IN THEM IS; WHEREFORE THE LORD BLESSED THE SEVENTH DAY AND HALLOWED IT.”

You remember when I taught you about the creation of the world, you learnt that Almighty God rested on the seventh day, after He had been six days finishing His wonderful works, just as it tells us in this Commandment.

Almighty God could not want rest, He could not be tired ; what then does this mean ? It means that He left off working His wonderful works, He did not create anything more. It was on the seventh day that He did no more ; so to make us remember what He had done, and because He knew we should always want rest, so good and kind as He always is, He ordered one day in seven to be a day of rest for us for ever. The seventh day was called the Sabbath—Sabbath means rest.

Now besides this goodness of Almighty God, in giving us a day of rest from work ; there was another reason why He made the Sabbath. It was that one day in seven should be His own Day ; that day He was to be worshipped and honoured more than on any other day ; and surely after His great goodness in making the world and all in it so good and beautiful, one day in seven is not too much to give up to His service in gratitude for all His mercies.

So you see why God commanded us to keep the Sabbath day holy.

The day on which the Sabbath was first kept was the seventh day, or Saturday. I dare say you have noticed that the Jews always

shut up their shops and keep Saturday as we do Sunday.

Now I must tell you why we Christians keep Sunday holy—the first day of the week, instead of Saturday the seventh. The reason is this; **ALMIGHTY** GOD finished His work of creating the world on Friday, the sixth day, and on Saturday, the seventh day, He rested from His work. Our **LORD JESUS CHRIST** came on earth to re-create or make all things new. He finished His Blessed work on Good Friday, when He suffered death on the Cross to make us new creatures. He was buried, and on Saturday He rested in the grave, the same day of the week that **ALMIGHTY** GOD had in the beginning of the world rested from His work.

But on the first day of the week a still more wonderful thing came to pass. Our Blessed **LORD** rose again from the dead. Because He rose from the dead we know that we shall also rise at the last day. His Resurrection was the cause of our resurrection. Because He lives we shall live also—and this is the reason why the Christian Church has always kept Sunday as a day of peaceful rest and holy joy.

Our **LORD** was called the Sun of Righteous-

ness; is not the day rightly called Sunday? As the Sun rose in glory and brightness on that Blessed Easter morning, making all bright, so CHRIST, who is our Sun, rose in greater glory, driving away the dark shadows, which like the night had so long been over all mankind.

There was another wonderful thing which happened on the first day of the week. The HOLY SPIRIT came down upon the Apostles, giving them power to preach the Gospel in all languages, and making them able to do all things to GOD'S glory in His Church. For though our Blessed LORD really founded the Church before His Ascension, yet He told them they were to wait at Jerusalem till the "Power from on High" came to them, that is, till they had received the HOLY SPIRIT. So that it was on Sunday, the Day of Pentecost, that the Church really began its work; another great reason why we should make Sunday our great Festival Day.

Sunday has been called the LORD'S Day from the earliest Christian times. It is the greatest of all Festivals, because our LORD is the greatest of all that can be honoured. It is the Festival of the Risen life which we have

in Him. It is the Festival of the Consecration of the Holy Catholic Church on the Day of Pentecost. It is "the Day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

Now, let us consider how we are to keep holy our Sabbath Day. First, we must never do any work or business on the LORD's Day that we can do on any other. Things that must be done are very different; and it is not a sin to do them.

We must help those who are ill or in trouble, on Sunday. When our Blessed LORD was on earth, some of the Jews found fault with Him because He cured the sick on the Sabbath Day. But He told them it was lawful to do good and to save life on the Sabbath Day; and He called them hypocrites because they pretended they thought it was a sin.

The greatest duty on Sunday is to go to Church, to confess our sins to ALMIGHTY GOD, to ask forgiveness of Him, to hear His Holy Word, to pray to Him, to praise Him, and more especially that we may receive the Holy Sacrament of our SAVIOUR'S BODY and BLOOD. This is the greatest and most blessed of all our *religious duties*; without it our LORD says we "*have no life in us.*" After we have done

this, there is no harm in taking a walk ; but we must not neglect Church for it, nor make it a pretence for holiday making ; much less ought it to be spent in tea gardens and such places ; which often lead to wrong on other days, and much more on Sundays.

Our Blessed LORD Himself walked in the corn fields on the Sabbath Day ; and then again the Jews accused Him of breaking the Sabbath ; but He told them how ALMIGHTY GOD had made the Sabbath for man, and that these harmless things are not sins.

A very good way to keep holy the LORD's Day, is to visit the sick, and read to them ; to teach in Sunday Schools ; or anything of the kind your clergyman may set you to do. Everybody can do something. Many women fancy they are excused from going to Church on Sunday because they have the dinner to cook, and so on—but with a little management and early rising this might be contrived. At any rate, it is generally found that “where there is a will, there is a way.”

Now, besides keeping Sundays properly, this Commandment leads us on to keep other *Festivals and Saints Days* which are appointed *by the Church*. It was God's Command v

His people, the Jews, that they should keep a great many days holy besides the Sabbath; and GOD by His HOLY SPIRIT, after our LORD's Ascension, taught the Church to appoint a great many days as Festivals and Fasts. I hope by GOD's help some day to tell you more about these Fasts and Festivals; but at present I will only say that they ought to be kept as far as possible in a religious manner, by going to Church, and above all, receiving the Holy Communion.

There is another thing we learn from the Fourth Commandment besides resting on the LORD's Day and keeping it holy. It is this: Six days, it says, thou shalt labour. We are to labour and do all we have to do on the other six days of the week. It is GOD's Will that all should work, some with their hands, and some with their heads. You must not think that only poor people work; many a rich man works harder with his brains than a poor man with his hands, and very often it is for the good of the poor he does work. When rich people work for the poor, they do it from love to God and charity to their fellow creatures. It would *be well if the poor who are helped by those richer than themselves, would think oftener of this.*

No one must be idle; if people are idle in the week, it is a very great sin if they try to make up for it by working on Sunday.

I think perhaps it may be as well to explain one or two more words of this Commandment; the cattle mean any animals that are used for work, such as horses, asses, and oxen. Oxen are used in many places to draw ploughs and waggons. GOD wishes dumb animals to rest as well as ourselves.

The stranger within the gates means anyone who may be stopping in the house; visitors or lodgers; all were to keep the Sabbath Day holy, the same as the family of the house where they were living.

Now we have come to the end of the four Commandments which teach us our duty to GOD; let us hear what the Catechism says about them.

Q. What is thy duty towards GOD?

A. My duty towards GOD, is, to believe in Him, to fear Him, and to love Him with all my heart, with all my mind, and with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship Him, to give Him thanks, to call upon Him, to honour His Holy Name and His Word, and to serve Him truly all the days of my life.

The First and Second Commandments teach us to believe, to fear, to love, and to worship God. I have told you that to love Him with all our heart means to give Him our heart's best love. To fear Him does not mean to be afraid of God, but to be afraid of offending Him by breaking His Commandments. To call upon Him means to pray to Him, and to tell Him all our wants and all our sorrows. We are taught by the Third and Fourth Commandments to honour His Holy Name and His Word; and all of them oblige us to "serve Him truly all the days of our life."



CHAPTER VI.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

"HONOUR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER, THAT
THY DAYS MAY BE LONG IN THE LAND WHICH
THE LORD THY GOD GIVETH THEE."

Now we are going to speak of the first of those Commandments which teach us our *duty to our neighbour*; that is to say, to all *our fellow creatures*.

Before all others, our greatest love and respect ought to be paid to our parents; next to Almighty God, our greatest duty is to them. God has given us this Commandment to show us how great a duty this is.

In many parts of the Bible we are told of the duty of children to parents, and of parents to children, for the Commandment speaks to both alike. They must be very unnatural parents and children who do not love each other; even among dumb animals we see this love. It is no excuse for disobedient children, that their parents are unkind to them; no, the faults of one side do not let the other off from a duty.

It is not only the young who are to honour their parents. Ignorant people reading the Scripture, where it says, "Children, obey your parents," have fancied only children in age, were meant; but this is a mistake. Children, in a religious way of speaking, means those who owe love and duty not only to fathers and mothers, but to anyone who may be in the place of their parents; they may be young or old, but they are still called children. You remember I told you the Jews are often called the Children of Israel, and

some of them were very old people, as well as of all ages, down to the youngest infant.

Our Blessed LORD called His disciples "Children," and we know they were all grown-up men.

So you see parents are to be honoured and obeyed as long as they live. And how ought we to honour them? What does honour mean? It means we must pay them the greatest possible respect, obey them in all things that are not forbidden by God's laws, and help and comfort them in sickness and old age. The Catechism says we are to "love, honour, and succour" our parents; to succour means to help.

The Commandment goes on to say, "That thy days may be long in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee." Our days here on earth may be few or many; we may live to be old, or die young; but still this promise holds good. The promise of long life to those who honour their parents, was given to the Jews; but we Christians look upon it as a Heavenly promise, the promise of everlasting life. This Commandment is called the "first Commandment with promise;" it is the only one that has any promise of reward to those

who keep it. But to disobedient children there is no such promise, no such happy hope; even in this world we seldom see them prosper. It often happens that Almighty God puts it into the hearts of parents to forbid their children some thing they wish for, and it seems unkind, and without reason; but many times their Heavenly Father takes this way of saving them from misery and harm, if they will only have faith in Him and obey those He has set over them.

Now some people may think that this Commandment cannot have anything to do with them, because their parents are dead; and how can they honour and obey those who are not living? Even in this way they can, by honouring their memory, and doing all they know would have pleased them if they had lived. But more than this. The Commandment teaches us our duty not only to our parents, but to all who are set over us—guardians, elder relations, all to whom we owe love and respect; to “honour and obey the Queen, and all who are put in authority under her.” The meaning of this is that we are to obey the laws of our country, and all those whose duty it is to see that the laws are

obeyed. And especially we are bound to "submit ourselves to all our teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters." To submit ourselves is to do what we are told to do, at once, humbly, and without complaining; this we are to do to our teachers; not only children, but grown people, if they are ignorant and need teaching, must submit to those who teach them, and give them as little trouble as possible; for this is the least they can do in return for the trouble it always is to teach persons who know little or nothing.

We are to submit to our Spiritual Pastors.

You remember I told you spiritual means something that has to do with the spirit or soul. Our Spiritual Pastors are our Clergymen. Pastor means a Shepherd. You have most likely seen pictures of our Lord as the Good Shepherd. Shepherds take care of their sheep, and the sheep know them, and follow them when they call.

Not long ago, I was passing over the South Downs, those hills near the sea, where many flocks of sheep are fed, when I heard the sound of music, and looking down a steep place, I saw a shepherd who was playing on a flute, and his flock of sheep were following

after him wherever he went. It was a pretty sight; and I thought of our own Good Shepherd, who leads us, and calls us with a voice sweeter than any earthly music.

And we are to be like these sheep. Our Blessed LORD is the Chief Shepherd; He feeds us, He leads us to the Living Waters, He goes after us when we stray, and if we will come, He brings us back to the fold again. But how does He do this now?

Before He ascended into Heaven He gave His disciples power to do all in His Name, to be His Shepherds of His flock. He said to them, "Feed My lambs; Feed My sheep." He meant that the disciples, and after them all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, to the end of the world, should be the Spiritual Pastors or Shepherds of His flock, by preaching to them the Gospel, feeding them with the Heavenly Food of His Sacraments, and guiding them in the path which leads to Heaven.

Now as our LORD has given us these Spiritual Pastors to lead us on our way to Heaven, and to help us when we fall into doubt or sin; it is both wrong and foolish not to go to them for their advice, to tell them all that troubles us, and submit our-

selves to them for the good of our souls. Our LORD has sent them into His Church for these very things. You know how He commanded them to "go teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST." How He told them to show forth His death till He comes again, in the Holy Communion. And how He gave them power to pronounce the Absolution, or GOD's forgiveness of sins, to those who truly confess and forsake them. All, therefore, who have a guilty or troubled conscience, and cannot quiet it, should go at once to GOD's minister; and as it says in the Prayer Book, open their grief,—that is to say, make a confession of their sins, that they may receive the benefit of this absolution.

The Catechism says next, we are to submit to our masters. This, of course, means masters and mistresses—indeed, all we are in any way bound to obey, any in whose house we are living; all superiors, as school-masters or mistresses; all matrons and governors of Institutions, under whose care we may be; *and we are to keep all rules, and obey them cheerfully and quickly, and as if we are*

really doing our duty to God, and not only to those set over us.

The Commandment also teaches us to "order ourselves lowly and reverently to all our betters." We all know our "betters" mean all those who are above us in station in this world. To order ourselves lowly and reverently, means to behave civilly and with proper respect.

Persons who are truly humble will always think others better than themselves, because the more they look into their own hearts, and see their own faults, other people will appear much less sinful and faulty. This rule holds good with all classes. There are few who have not superiors in one way or another. The young, and those of low station, should be civil and respectful to all above them, both in age and station. God's Word never teaches us that all are equal in station; no, there will always be rich and poor, great and small, till the end of the world.

I have no more to say about this Commandment, except the sweet thoughts that it brings to us of our Blessed Lord's example of obedience to His earthly parents, not only as *a child*, but till He was thirty years old; not

only to His mother, the Blessed Virgin, but to Saint Joseph, whom He knew was His foster-father only; and this because he was the head of the house where He lived. He left us an example that we should follow His steps. Oh! let us follow Him in all things, and particularly in this love of His parents, and obedience to their commands.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

“THOU SHALT DO NO MURDER.”

THERE is not one of GOD's Commandments which people will more often say they never break than this one—“Thou shalt do no murder.” The reason is because they do not understand it in the way our Blessed LORD explains it to us.

A murderer is always looked upon with horror; even the worst of men will feel this horror.

To take the life of a fellow creature is a

fearful crime, one punished with death by the law in this world, and if unrepented of, with everlasting fire in the world to come.

Let us hope that none who read this little book will ever even think of committing so dreadful a crime, much less be guilty of it.

Now let us consider how it is that though so few are found guilty of actually taking away life, yet so many are in the habit of breaking this Commandment—"Thou shalt do no murder."

The Bible tells us, "He that hateth his brother is a murderer."

The word brother means the same as neighbour, it means everyone, because all are brethren. He that hateth! How often we hear people say "I hate such a one," and they never think of this text. Hatred, ill will, and all unkindness, are ways of breaking the Sixth Commandment. If indulged in, they may lead to murder. Violent temper, if not kept down—who knows what it may lead to? A blow given in anger, and with the wish to give pain, makes the person who gives it a murderer in intention, if not in deed. What a dreadful sight it is to see anyone in a violent passion; many a one has killed another in a fit of

passion. How pleased our great enemy the devil must be, to see people giving themselves up to him in this way!

Then again, unkindness, neglect, and all kinds of ill treatment, may kill; and what is that but murder! We hear of poor creatures dying, worn out with ill usage and unkindness; at the last day their murderers will be judged for this.

Many disobedient children have brought down their parents' grey heads with sorrow to the grave; many unbaptized Infants have lost their lives from being deserted, or perhaps a more fearful end, to hide the disgrace of their wretched mothers. Many have caused their unborn babes to perish without seeing the light; and perhaps never thought they were murderers. Yet they are so in the sight of God, if not in the sight of man; the sin may never be found out in this world, though it is very seldom it is not found out; but it will be ever eating at the heart of the sinner all through life; and think what will be the death-bed of such a one; and what will be the Judgment Day, and the sentence of the Great Judge?

There is another kind of murder which I

have not yet spoken of—I mean self-murder, or suicide, as it is called. This is not only a most wicked crime, but the most foolish thing any-one can do.

People are in trouble; and because they have not learned the right way of bearing their trouble, they think to get rid of it altogether by going out of the world. Even if there were no other world, this would be foolish; for how often troubles rightly borne are in the end blessings; and we never know how things may turn out; at any rate, everything comes to an end at last. But as we know there is another world where murderers are cast into hell, how foolish it is to exchange a misery which cannot last for ever for one which will never never end?—"where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." The poor wretched self-murderer closes his eyes to his trouble in this world, and opens them again in the other world in far greater misery which will last for ever.

Even now, there is another way of breaking this Commandment. You know the soul is said to die; to be destroyed when it is cast into hell; it is a never ending death, always going on, and never ending. Well, what is it that

kills the soul! Is it not sin? To kill the body is an awful crime, but to kill the soul is even worse. A person who is murdered may be in a fit state to die; but if the soul is killed there is an end of all happiness for ever. The murder of the soul is caused by leading persons into sin. If you have ever led anyone into sin; ever enticed them to do wrong; think of the dreadful risk you have run of murdering that person's soul.

Murder has always been punished with death, because GOD has said, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of GOD made He him." To mar or spoil this image or likeness of GOD is not only a wrong to our fellow-creature, but an insult to ALMIGHTY GOD, whose likeness he is in. And as GOD is the LORD of life, so no one can take life without His permission.

GOD has appointed kings and magistrates to rule and judge, and He permits our country to send out soldiers to defend us from our enemies; and so it is lawful for the judges to condemn murderers to death, and for our soldiers to fight in a just cause. Taking life in this way is not to be called murder, but

justice; such as ALMIGHTY GOD allows and commands.

Now we have seen how the breaking of this command all comes from pride, anger, and the wish for revenge; let us pray heartily, whenever we say the Litany, "From envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness—good LORD, deliver us." And let us turn our thoughts to find out what we ought to do that we may keep it rightly.

We must learn humility and patience; when provoked, we must lay our troubles before Almighty GOD, and throw away all angry feeling. We must learn the LAW OF LOVE. GOD IS LOVE; we do not only say GOD loves us, but we say HE IS LOVE itself, and we must try and be like Him. We know how He loved us when He sent His only SON to die for us; we know how JESUS loves us, sinners as we are. He loves us still, though we have behaved far worse to Him than ever any of our fellowcreatures have ever behaved to us.

There is so much in the Bible about Love; it is sometimes called Charity, but it means the same thing as Love. Our Blessed LORD said, "A new Commandment give I unto you—that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that

ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." St. John the Evangelist, the Beloved Disciple, in that part of the Bible called his Epistle, (Epistle means a letter, it was written as a letter,) says very much about love and brotherly kindness. Love to God, and love to man. He tells us we are not to "love in word, neither in tongue," (meaning making a great talk about it,) "but in deed and in truth." We are to show our love to God and our neighbour by our deeds. Saint John says we do not love God if we do not love one another.

We are not only to love our friends, but our enemies. Our Blessed Lord said, "Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you;" and, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." If we do this, we shall soon turn enemies into friends. We are to be kind to one another, to speak gently—even rough people can learn to speak gently if they try. We are to think the best we can of all; not to think they mean to be unkind; to help to the best of our power, to pray for all, to forgive *all, even as God* for CHRIST's sake will forgive *us.*

There are two Collects in the Prayer Book—one for the Love of GOD, and the other for Love to our neighbour—which it would be well to add to our prayers :

For the Sixth Sunday after Trinity:—O GOD, who hast prepared for them that love Thee such good things as pass man's understanding ; pour into our hearts such love towards Thee, that we, loving Thee above all things, may obtain Thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire ; through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Amen.

The Collect for Quinquagesima Sunday, the Sunday next before Lent:—O LORD, who hast taught us that all our doings without Charity are, nothing worth : Send Thy HOLY SPIRIT, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of Charity, the very bond of peace and all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before Thee. Grant this, for Thine only SON JESUS CHRIST's sake. Amen.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

“THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.”

It is very painful to be obliged to speak of this sin, and yet it is so common, and so many more souls are lost by it than by any other sin, that the servants of God would not be doing their duty if they did not do their best to try and make those who are guilty of it see what very great sinners they are, and to warn all young persons to shun everything that may lead to the sin of impurity—a sin which more than any other is horrible in the sight of Almighty God, who is so pure that He cannot look upon a sin like this.

A holy man who lived many years ago, says in one of the books he wrote, “There are no sins the devil delights in so much as those against chastity; and why? First, Because this vice so blinds the sinner, that he cannot see the insult he offers to God, nor the *miserable state* of damnation in which he lives; *secondly*, Because it hardens the heart and

makes it obstinate; and thirdly, Because it leads to a hundred other sins."

The words of the Commandment are, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." The word means, first, when the sin is committed by those who are married. Our Blessed LORD said, "Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another committeth adultery. Not only those who leave husband or wife to live with another are guilty of adultery; but our LORD says, "Whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." There are people now-a-days, who think, if they can get divorced by a court of law, they are at liberty to marry again: but you see the Bible says quite different. A husband and wife may be living apart from one another, but nothing can make them to be no longer husband and wife:—for what GOD has joined together man cannot put asunder.

Whenever we read in Holy Scripture of the sin of adultery being committed, we are sure to find that GOD's judgment fell on the sinners. When David took the wife of Uriah the Hittite, and afterwards killed her husband, Almighty GOD was very angry with him. *It is true that he was very penitent, and was*

forgiven; but the child that he set his heart upon died: this was one of his punishments. Another was, that as he had slain Uriah with the sword; so the sword was never to depart from his house. The meaning of this is, that as long as any of his family were living, one or other of them should meet with their death by being killed either in battle, or by secret enemies; and we read that this also came to pass.

To this day God does punish the sin of adultery even in this world. Think of the misery that comes from a wife leaving the husband and children that God has given her, and going to live with another man!—and in the same way the husband leaving his wife for another! Is not their end almost always a miserable one—the just punishment of their double sin of adultery and fornication.

But quite as dreadful in the sight of the most pure God, is this sin in those who are not married—the sin of impurity. As perfect purity makes human beings most like the Holy Angels, so impurity brings them down even lower than the beasts who are without reason. *But how can we think without horror of this sin being committed by those who have been*

baptized into CHRIST—whose bodies have been made temples of the HOLY SPIRIT! You remember when I was teaching you the meaning of the Apostles' Creed,—when I was speaking about GOD the HOLY GHOST,—I reminded you how much worse a sin always is, if it is done in a Church, and how much more we are shocked at it, because of its being done in God's Holy Temple; and yet, how very little people think of sinning with their bodies, in which the HOLY SPIRIT has made His dwelling place. We are told in Holy Scripture, “Who-soever shall defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy.” These are fearful words. Again, when we were baptized we were made “members of Christ;” and, “shall I take the members of CHRIST and make them the members of an harlot; GOD forbid.”

So very terrible is this sin in the sight of Almighty GOD, that we may wonder whether there can be any forgiveness for those who have lived in it. By GOD's mercy there is forgiveness for those who truly repent and show their repentance by their after lives. “The BLOOD of JESUS CHRIST cleanseth from all sin.” “Though your sins be as scarlet, they *shall be white as snow.*” But there is no time

to be lost. How do you know that God will give you time for repentance after having neglected so many warnings? How many have been cut off in the midst of their sins: and where are their unhappy souls?

And now, how should those persons behave who have repented and confessed their sinful lives; who feel that God for CHRIST's sake has forgiven them? Is it becoming in them to hold up their heads and think much of themselves, because perhaps they are better than others who have not as yet been led to repentance! No, they should all their lives live humbly, be penitents to their death. They should show their gratitude to Almighty God for having snatched them as a brand from the burning, by trying to keep others in the right way, and by doing all they can to save from everlasting fire those who are living in sin. You have heard of Saint Mary Magdalene, who was so great a sinner; do you think she ever thought much of herself after her repentance and forgiveness? No, she lived and died a true penitent.

Besides this, persons who have been living *in this sin*, when they are reformed, must not *be surprised* or angry that others are very

slow to feel the same confidence in them as before, and think that what has happened may happen again. And though we ought to show all kindness to them, yet it is a very good thing that there should be such a feeling of disgust at the sin itself as to keep others from it; even though it may often, at times, be trying to the sinners themselves.

We are taught in the Bible, that, like all others of God's Commandments, there are more ways of breaking this one than by the actual sin. Three ways: by thought, word, and deed. The temptation generally begins in the thoughts. People think about wicked things till they begin to like to think of them; and feel curious to know more of them. They listen to wrong words and talk, till at last, when the worst temptation comes, they feel no scruple in giving way to it, and at once fall into the sin. Besides, we are told that longing after bad ways is as wicked as if the sin were actually done. "He who looks upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery already with her in his heart;" and of course, the sin is the same whether it is a man or a woman who commits it.

We need not to speak all the ways of

breaking the Seventh Commandment; but you must remember that every thought, word, or deed, that is in the least impure or immodest, is forbidden. All looks, all actions, that you would be ashamed to let a modest person see, must not be done. All bad books, songs, or pictures, must not for a moment be looked at. All kinds of dress or amusements that lead to wrong in any way, must not be indulged in.

This Commandment also forbids what the Catechism calls "all the sinful lusts of the flesh." The HOLY SPIRIT, speaking by the Apostle St. Paul, says, "The works of the flesh are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like; of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God." You see drunkenness is one of the sins which will shut people out from Heaven.

There is a great deal in the Bible against *drunkenness*. People do not think half enough *of the sinfulness* of indulging in drink; and

how impossible it is that they can be saved if they die in this sin. And how often drunkards do meet with sudden deaths! What is far below the lowest of the beasts but a drunken man? What is lower still than a drunken woman? If they could only see themselves, one would think they would for ever give up the sin, if not for more solemn motives. Think of how many other sins drinking leads to. Think of the destruction of body and soul. Certain ruin to the soul, if persisted in, and not repented of.

And now we must consider how we may best keep this Commandment, which is the Law of Purity. It is not only by keeping out of the way of temptation, but by praying for strength to resist it when it does come; by always keeping the most Pure and Holy God in our thoughts, keeping Him always before us, for if He is on our right hand we shall not fall. Think of the Blessed Virgin Mary, ever Virgin, ever most pure, who had the great honour of being chosen to be the Mother of our LORD; think of all the holy and pure saints gone to their rest; and then, when tempted, you will be able to say, as Joseph did, "*How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*"

Never look upon anything that is in the least against modesty; fly from all appearance of evil. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Almighty God, who does not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to resist, will, if we lift up our hearts to Him, with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it.

CHAPTER IX.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

“THOU SHALT NOT STEAL.”

THIS Commandment not only forbids stealing, but all kinds of cheating, purloining, pilfering, and all unjust dealing.

If a robbery is committed, the law will punish the thief; and we know how disgraceful it is to be called a thief. But many who would be greatly offended at being called thieves, are still guilty of breaking the Eighth Commandment.

All kinds of cheating or over-reaching or imposing upon others is really dishonesty,

though people could not, perhaps, be put in prison for it.

The Church Catechism speaks of "picking and stealing." Picking means a kind of petty thieving, "picking" up things you may suppose will not be missed. Many a school child begins a dishonest life by picking up little things—slate-pencils, needles and thread, or the other children's toys; servants will very often take what they have no right to, and call it their perquisites. Giving away food or anything that belongs to your employer, or eating or wasting what they expected to be kept safely, is just as bad as if you stole it. Wearing your masters' or mistresses' clothes is an act of dishonesty. All these things are against the Eighth Commandment. Again, getting things at shops that you cannot pay for, running into debt, borrowing and not paying back again, is all as bad as stealing. The Bible says, "The ungodly borroweth and payeth not again." If you keep a shop, giving false weight or measure is stealing from your customer what he has paid for. The Bible says, "A false balance and deceitful weight is an abomination to the LORD." If you ask *more than the goods are worth, or try to pass*

off damaged goods as perfect, it is all stealing. It is not honest to run down anything you want to buy, for the sake of getting it cheap, when you know it is worth the money asked for it. There is a text about that. "It is naught, says the buyer; and when he goeth his way, then he boasteth;" that is, he says it is bad, and gets it cheap, and then boasts of what a bargain he has got. If a poor person begs a ticket for meat or grocery, and goes and sells it for liquor, it is cheating the person who gave the ticket; it is like stealing.

Telling lies is cheating; it is imposing on someone; everything that is not true and just, is against this Commandment; and slander, particularly, is forbidden, because it robs people of their good name.

There is also the sin of robbing Almighty God. If you rob a person of anything that has been trusted to his care by another, you rob both. So if you take from another the goods which God has given him to be used in His service, you rob God Himself. Robbing churches is a very great sin, it is called sacrilege, and is severely punished by the law. *It is to rob God.* So is keeping back tithes *and offerings*, anything that ought to be paid

to the Church, is a very great sin in the sight of God.

Now what is the cause of so many people falling into the sin of theft? First, covetousness, then envy, and often idleness. Holy Scripture tells us the love of money is the root of all evil; not money itself, for we may do a great deal of good with money; but the love of it, which often leads to covetousness and dishonesty. Envy, at seeing others enjoy comforts and pleasure which they cannot afford to have, will lead to dishonesty. Idleness often drives people to commit theft; too lazy to work for their own living, they prefer to live upon other people's earnings.

There is one way of being dishonest of which many cowardly people are guilty. I mean seeing dishonesty going on, and not telling their employers of it. This is really joining in it, and is a sin. When you do this, you are encouraging the thief in his wickedness. It is very true, people are often afraid to tell of what they know, because often they are not believed, and are looked upon as slanderers, for many persons seem as if they would rather be cheated than be told of what *they did not find out themselves; but this*

should not hinder a truly honest person from making known what he feels to be wrong.

And now how to keep the Commandment. To those who have fallen into the sin of dishonesty Saint Paul says, "Let him that stole, steal no more; but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." Another thing to be done by those who have the sin of stealing, cheating, or deceiving, on their conscience, is what is called to make restitution; that is, to give back what has been stolen; or, if that cannot be done, to give something instead to make amends. Without this, confession of the fault is of NO USE. IT MUST BE DONE. The best way to keep this Commandment is first by seeking after the true riches which lead to Life Eternal; by thinking of Almighty God as a God of Justice as well as of Mercy; and how displeasing to Him all dishonesty must be. You know it is commonly said, "Honesty is the best policy," so it is in this world, and there can be no doubt about it in the world to come.

You will read in the Gospels that there *were no persons* our Blessed LORD finds so *much fault with* as the hypocrites, and this

shows us how abominable deceit is in His sight. You remember the traitor Judas, who betrayed our Blessed LORD to death; how he pretended to care for the poor, and only because he was a thief, and had the bag in which the money was kept. He was a hypocrite as well as a thief, and ended by betraying his Master. Knowing then that our GOD is a GOD of truth, and that He abhors all deceit and dishonesty, let us all try and keep strictly to truth, to open and fair dealing. However poor we may be, we shall then have a clear conscience, and sleep the sleep of the honest, though our bed may be hard, and our food and clothing coarse and scanty.

CHAPTER X.

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT.

“THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST
THY NEIGHBOUR.”

To bear false witness against anyone, is, in plain language, to tell lies about him. We are not told that we are never to come

forward as a witness against our neighbour; but only that we are not to be a false witness. We must speak the truth, or keep silent.

There are many things which this Commandment forbids. First of all it forbids taking a false oath to the hurt of another, either in a court of justice, or in any other way, with the view of making him seem to be guilty when he is innocent. This, as we have seen before, is also breaking the Third Commandment, by taking God's Name in vain; and is a double sin. It is punished by the law here; and will be punished hereafter at the Day of Judgment.

The Ninth Commandment forbids lying—all kinds of lies, for whatever reason they may be told.

There are many kinds of lies: lies which are told on purpose to slander and do harm to others; there are cowardly lies told to excuse ourselves, and in a sly way accuse others; there are boasting lies, to praise ourselves; there are flattering lies, to get into a person's favour; there are lies told to make oneself *amusing*, to divert company. There are, also, *lies told in the way of business*, as it is called;

putting off bad for good, short weight and measure for the proper quantity. To promise to send work home by a certain day, when you know you do not mean to get it done, is another way of lying, and a very common one too; and when this is a tradesman's habit it causes the customers to fall into the same sin, by saying they want their work before they really do want it, fearing they shall not get it in good time.

Besides all these, there are ways of acting lies; persons pretending to be what they are not, pretending to be religious and devout, pretending to be attending to their prayers, when they are only doing so to be thought good. Pretending to be honest, when they are quite different. All such hypocrisy is very hateful to the God of Truth.

But the chief thing which the Ninth Commandment forbids is "evil speaking, lying, and slandering." Speaking ill of others to take away their good name; telling of their faults when you have no business to do so. Telling tales is wrong, because it sets people against one another, and causes them to suspect the wrong person. There is a text in *the Bible* which ought to be better known

than it is. "Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people." This was a law among the Jews; and it was this that our Blessed LORD was thinking of when He said, "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." This is the same as if our LORD had said, If anyone offends you, or you think has done you wrong, don't go talking about it to everyone, but first go quietly to the person and tell him what you have heard; most likely this will make peace between you. But it is only if he will not listen, or persists in the wrong, that you are to tell others, that they may persuade him, and you may be cleared. The meaning of telling it to the Church is, that formerly the *clergy had greater power of reproving those who committed sin, and if they would not*

repent, of punishing them, as it tells us in the Service for Ash Wednesday.

If you put a bad meaning on what persons say or do, if you do not give them credit for what they deserve, or do or say anything that makes them seem worse than they are, it is in one way bearing false witness against them; it is breaking the Ninth Commandment, and the Eighth also, by robbing them of their good name.

You must remember that the evil-speaking, lying, and slandering, which the Catechism speaks of, and the envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, from which we pray in the Litany, "Good LORD, deliver us," is never so great a sin as when it is done against GOD's Holy Word, His Church, and His Ministers. This is, indeed, doing the work of the devil. Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead for telling a lie, because the lie was against GOD's HOLY SPIRIT, and told to His Minister. St. Peter said they had not "lied unto men, but unto GOD." Think of the wickedness, the foolishness, of trying to keep back the truth from ALMIGHTY GOD, when He knows all before. This is what is done when a false confession is made. It is intended to deceive

man; but it is a lie unto God—a fearful sin.

And now let us turn from these thoughts; and consider how we may best keep this Commandment, the Law of Truth. The Bible says, “Let love be without dissimulation,” this means without deceit. Our God is a GOD of Love; if we truly, and with honest and true hearts, love Him, then we shall love Truth. We shall be true and just in all our dealings, honest and open with all. Parents cannot be too careful to bring up their children to speak the truth. They should be taught, if they have done wrong, to speak the truth, and bear the punishment; not as many do, tell the truth for the sake of getting off from the punishment. Satan is called the father of lies. Let us pray earnestly to be delivered from all temptation to this sin, that we may always walk honestly as children of the light.

CHAPTER XI.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT.

“THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOUR’S HOUSE, THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOUR’S WIFE, NOR HIS SERVANT, NOR HIS MAID, NOR HIS OX, NOR HIS ASS, NOR ANYTHING THAT IS HIS.”

Most of us know that to covet means to wish very much for something belonging to another person.

Many think little of this sin; but if it were only a small sin it would have not been written in God’s Commandment, in the same way as other sins that we all think are very wicked. If you only think what covetousness leads to, you will see why it is so great a sin. Everything that has been stolen has been first coveted, and so has everything that has been got by wrong. Let us consider each part of the Commandment by itself. First, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house. How many false wills have been made, how many false deeds have been forged, to get possession

of houses and lands—all dishonest actions. Covetousness has led these persons to break the Eighth Commandment—"Thou shalt not steal." Secondly, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife. Here is forbidden the covetousness that would lead to Adultery, the breaking of the Seventh Commandment.

The Commandment goes on to say, Thou shalt not covet "his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his." Men-servants and maid-servants were in those times like slaves, and were the property of their masters. The ox and the ass are spoken of because they were the most valuable things anyone could have in those days. Asses in those countries are used as much as horses are with us, and are worth as much as horses.

The Bible tells us "covetousness is idolatry." This means that covetous people make an idol of their money.

Here is another text: "The love of money is the root of all evil;" and here I must again tell you to notice that it is not said, as some *people think* who have not read their Bible *carefully*, that money is the root of all evil;

no! money properly used is a great blessing; it is the greedy love of it, either to hoard it up, or to buy comforts for themselves, that makes people covetous.

Covetousness was one of the sins of Judas Iscariot, who betrayed his Master. We are told he was a thief, and covetousness is the beginning of dishonesty. It has been thought he never meant to betray our LORD to death; he thought, most likely, that Jesus could work a miracle, and deliver Himself out of the hands of the Jews. And then he could have kept the money for which he sold Him, and no one would have known he had it. But we read that "when he saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood; and they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the thirty pieces of silver in the Temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself."

Thus, you see, another murder—self-murder—was added to his crimes; and all began with covetousness.

The way to get rid of covetous thoughts, is

to pray for the love of God and our neighbour, and for a contented mind.

First, the love of God. If we truly love Him, we shall wish to give all to Him; not to hold back anything. And so it is with love of our neighbour. If we love him, we shall wish to see him happy, and be pleased to see him enjoying things which are out of our own power:

But you must remember it is not only things which may be bought with money that a covetous person longs for. Health, strength, a good situation; the sight of another enjoying these will make him miserable; and if he indulge in these envious thoughts, they will surely lead him into sin. Rich and poor alike may fall into the sin of covetousness; there are many texts in the Bible which warn us against the sin of coveting other men's goods, and envying and hating those who own them.

A great safeguard against covetousness is to think humbly of oneself. If we think, What am I that I should expect to have more than I do have? Do I deserve the blessings I *already* enjoy? Then we shall find we have *far more than* we can ever deserve.

Then there is another thing. The good things of this life are often given to try people, to see what good use they will make of them; and think how very much they are answerable for using them rightly. Sometimes riches are a snare, and become at last the punishment of the wicked. Be sure none but the contented can ever be really happy, or have that peace which passes understanding.

There is a text in the Proverbs of Solomon which beautifully shows to us the prayer of the contented mind. "Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full, and deny Thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the Name of my God in vain." (Proverbs, xxx. 8.)

CONCLUDING CHAPTER.

Now we have gone through all the Ten Commandments, let us consider what we ought to learn from them on the whole.

It may be told in one word—LOVE. Love to GOD. Love to man. If we love GOD, we shall keep His Commandments; and if we wish to enter into eternal life in Heaven, we must do our best to keep them all. If we do not love our neighbour, the love of GOD is not in us.

The next thing for us to think of is, how all must be kept, and how if we break one, we are in danger of being guilty of all.

And how shall we keep them all? Even as I said before, by loving GOD above all things, and by loving our neighbour as ourselves. "This do," said our Blessed LORD, "and thou shalt live."

All of us who have been baptized have promised to keep GOD's Commandments. The Jews also were bound to do this; but *they had not* the light of the Gospel to show *them how*, nor the Holy Spirit to help them

to keep them. Good men among the Jews kept the Commandments very strictly after their own way; but it was in the letter, and not in the spirit. This means taking them just as they are written, and not as our Blessed LORD taught. They thought if they never killed a fellow-creature they were quite innocent of breaking the Sixth Commandment; not understanding that anger, hatred, malice, and all ill-will, is forbidden by it. Again, in the seventh chapter of St. Mark's Gospel, our LORD reproves the Pharisees who were teachers among the Jews, because they allowed the people to fancy they were keeping the Commandments properly when they were not doing so. You may remember when He says, "Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother. But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or his mother, It is Corban, that is, a gift by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, he shall be free; and ye suffer him no more to do aught for his father or his mother; making the Commandment of God of none effect through your tradition."

The meaning of this is: If a father or mother was in want, and came to their son for relief, he would say, I cannot help you

for what I had is "Corban," that is, a gift which I have given to the LORD, and I must not take it away from Him. This was what our LORD called making the Commandment of none effect, taking away the real meaning of it. For we know that to honour and help our parents is far better in the sight of God than any gift that we can give to Him. Our LORD said also to them, "And many such like things ye do."

I hope you see now, and understand how I have tried to show you the way our LORD JESUS CHRIST has taught us to keep GOD'S Commandment. His life on earth was spent in showing us that He came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it; and you have seen how, in gratitude for our Redemption, we are bound to obey ALMIGHTY GOD. There is another thing. The Commandments are to be the rule of our life. It is by them we are to live, and by them we shall be judged at the last day. But we must judge ourselves, that we be not judged of the LORD. We must examine ourselves, how we have *kept the* Commandments; every day we *should ask* ourselves how we have kept them, *and beg pardon* of Almighty God for our sins.

No one must go to Holy Communion with an unrepented unforgiven sin. The reason why the Ten Commandments are read at the beginning of the Communion Service, is that all who hear may ask themselves if they are living in any of these sins, and if so, they must not receive the Blessed Sacrament. But of this I hope to speak to you another time.

Before I finish this little book, I will show you the danger of breaking even one of God's Commandments, and how it may lead from one thing to another till many of them are broken.

Suppose young persons are forbidden by their parents, or masters or mistresses, to go holiday-making on Sunday, and they disobey and go. They break the Third and Fourth Commandments by not honouring their father and mother, and by not keeping God's Day holy. This Sunday holiday-making may lead them into bad company, where they learn to take God's Holy Name in vain, thus breaking the Third Commandment; worse still, it may lead them to their ruin by breaking the Seventh Commandment—ruin of body and soul—to rioting, drunkenness, and

all those sins which for ever shut the unrepented sinner out of Heaven.

Again, Covetousness; think what evil that leads to. People covet something belonging to another; they think about it, and long for it, until they begin to plan how they may get it, and they steal it. They lay their plans, nothing stops them; and at the last they perhaps commit murder to get what they at first only just a little coveted. Then they will let an innocent person be accused; to screen themselves they will bear false witness against him. See how many sins come out of this common one of covetousness.

Evil thoughts are the beginning of all sin. Let us try earnestly to watch over our thoughts, words, and deeds, but especially our thoughts, which lead to words and deeds.

“Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips. O let not my heart be inclined to any evil thing.” This was the prayer of holy David, in the Psalms. Let it be our prayer, and so shall we be better able to “Fear God and keep *His Commandments*; for this is the whole *duty of man.*”







